

PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Group }
Art Unit: Unknown }
 }
Attorney }
Docket No.: AUC0002-01 }
 }
Applicant: Richard E. Whipp et al. }
 }
Invention: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR THE }
 AUTOMATED RELEASE OF A }
 VEHICLE TO ONE OF A PLURALITY }
 OF DIFFERENT USERS }
 }
Serial No: Unknown }
 }
Filed: Herewith }
 }
Examiner: Unknown }

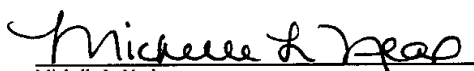
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on July 25, 2001


Michelle L. Neal

10658 U.S. PTO
09/912958
07/25/01

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Box Patent Application
Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Applicants wish to bring to the attention of the Examiner the documents identified on the attached form PTO-1449. Applicants respectfully request that these documents be made of record in the present application. A copy of each of the cited references is attached hereto.


The German Laid Open Application is understood to concern a generic type of vehicle hire system. In order to hire a vehicle from a pool of vehicles, a user must prove his identity at one of the communication pillars provided at each hire station, for example by means of a user-specific card. When successful identification has occurred, the communication pillar issues driving authorization for a vehicle which is ready to be picked up at the collection and return point, for which purpose it may be constructed as an automatic key-issuing machine. When returning the vehicle, the automatic key issuing machine takes back the key. The communication pillars have a communication link to a central monitoring and recording station in order to record the period of hire and the departure and arrival times, in order to calculate a charge.

Different vehicle keys can be assigned to the vehicles. Preferably, the vehicle keys are stored in series in the communication post according to the sequence in which they are given out

at the respective communication post, and are issued again as required. The vehicles are parked one behind the other, in a sequence corresponding to their arrival. If electric vehicles, they can be recharged at this time. This function of monitoring the number of vehicles in the individual collection and return point can be assigned to the central station so that shortages of vehicles at particular collection and return points, one or more vehicles can be coupled to a vehicle which is departing a point of surplus for the point of shortage. The user does not have the option of selecting a particular vehicle for hire.

If any fees are necessary in connection with this document, or insufficient fees are sent herewith, please charge Deposit Account No. 02-0385, Baker & Daniels.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael D. Smith", is written over a horizontal line.

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE CITATION <i>(Use several sheets if necessary)</i>				Docket Number (Optional) AUC0002-01		Application Number Unknown	
				Applicant(s) Richard E. Whipp, et al.			
				Filing Date Herewith		Group Art Unit Unknown	

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

EXAMINER INITIAL	REF	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	NAME	CLASS	SUBCLASS	DATE APPROPRI- ATE
		3,624,608	11/30/71	Altman			
		3,665,397	5/23/72	Di Napoli et al.			
		5,247,160	9/21/93	Zicker			
		5,289,369	2/22/94	Hirshberg			
		5,726,885	3/10/98	Klein et al.			
		5,812,070	9/22/98	Tagami et al.			
		5,864,829	1/26/99	Tago			

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

REF	DOCUMENT NUMBER	DATE	COUNTRY	CLASS	SUBCLASS	Translation	
						YES	NO
	2210088	10/5/72	Germany				X

OTHER DOCUMENTS *(Including Author, Title, Date, Pertinent Pages, Etc.)*

EXAMINER	DATE CONSIDERED
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EXAMINER: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP Section 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.